

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

**This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:**

**LISTING OF CLAIMS:**

1. (original): A game machine which enables a player and an opponent to play a battle by laying down their cards in a game screen, the game machine comprising:

a control device which increases the number of cards available in a battle when the player continues winning.

2. (original): The game machine of claim 1, wherein the control device sets a plurality of stages in which a plurality of opposing characters which are opponents in a battle are able to appear, causes the player to advance to a next stage after having won over respective opposing characters in a certain stage, and increases the number of cards available in a battle.

3. (original): The game machine of claim 1, wherein the control device sets a plurality of stages in which a plurality of opposing characters which are opponents in a battle are able to appear, and increases the number of cards available in a battle when the player has won over the opposing characters at least a predetermined number of times in a certain stage.

4. (original): The game machine of claim 1, wherein the control device enables loading of, on a per-unit-card-information-set basis, a plurality of card information sets pertaining to a plurality of cards recorded on a computer readable medium, thereby enabling the player to increase the number of cards available in a battle.

5. (original): The game machine of claim 4, wherein the control device sets a read enable flag for a card information set for which loading has been permitted.

6. (original): The game machine of claim 4, wherein the plurality of card information sets are set so as to differ from each other.

7. (original): The game machine of claim 5, wherein the plurality of card information sets are set so as to differ from each other.

8. (original): The game machine of claim 4, wherein the computer readable medium includes an external computer readable medium removably attached to the game machine, and a setting region for the read enable flag is formed on the external computer readable medium.

9. (original): The game machine of claim 5, wherein the computer readable medium includes an external computer readable medium removably attached to the game machine, and a setting region for the read enable flag is formed on the external computer readable medium.

10. (withdrawn): The game machine of claim 1, wherein the control device updates time information pertaining to the world of a game every time the player plays a battle with an opposing character, and effects contents of an event when requirements for occurrence of an event are satisfied if the updated time corresponds to a predetermined date and time at which an event is to arise.

11. (withdrawn): The game machine of claim 10, wherein the control device causes the player to acquire a new card available in a battle when the player has won over an opposing character, when the player's winning over an opposing character is defined as a requirement for occurrence of an event.

12. (original): A method of controlling operation of a game machine which enables a player and an opponent to play a battle by laying down their cards, the method comprising the steps of:

setting a plurality of stages in which a plurality of opposing characters which are opponents in a battle are able to appear; and

causing the player to proceed to the next stage when having won over the opposing characters in a certain stage, thereby increasing the number of cards available in a battle.

13. (withdrawn): The method of claim 12, further comprising the steps of:  
updating time information pertaining to the world of a game every time the player plays a battle with an opposing character; and

effecting details of an event when requirements for occurrence of an event have been satisfied if the updated date and time corresponds to a predetermined date and time at which a certain event is to arise.

14. (allowed) A method of controlling operation of a game machine which enables a player and an opponent to play a battle by laying down their cards, the method comprising the steps of:

setting a plurality of stages in which a plurality of opposing characters which are opponents in a battle are able to appear; and

increasing the number of card available in a battle when the player has won over the opposing characters at least a predetermined number of times in a certain stage.

15. (allowed) The method of claim 14, further comprising the steps of:

updating time information pertaining to the world of a game every time the player plays a battle with an opposing character; and

effecting details of an event when requirements for occurrence of an event have been satisfied if the updated date and time corresponds to a predetermined date and time at which a certain event is to arise.

16. (original): A computer readable medium having recorded thereon an operation control program for controlling operation of a game machine which enables a player and an opponent to play a battle by laying down their cards, the operation control program comprising:

a processing routine for increasing the number of cards available in a battle when the player continues winning.

17. (original): The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein the processing routine includes:

setting a plurality of stages in which a plurality of opposing characters which are opponents in a battle are able to appear, and

causing the player to proceed to the next stage when having won over the opposing characters in a certain stage, thereby increasing the number of cards available in a battle.

18. (original): The computer readable medium of claim 16, wherein the processing routine includes:

setting a plurality of stages in which a plurality of opposing characters which are opponents in a battle are able to appear, and

increasing the number of cards available in a battle when the player has won over the opposing characters at least a predetermined number of times in a certain stage.

19. (new): The computer readable medium of Claim 16, wherein the processing routine includes:

updating time information pertaining to the world of a game every time the player plays a battle with an opposing character, and

effecting details of an event when requirements for occurrence of an event have been satisfied if the updated date and time corresponds to a predetermined date and time at which a certain event is to arise.